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Security Council

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Letter dated 3 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached the report of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of the United Republic of Tanzania in January 2006 (see annex). This report was written under my supervision after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Augustine P. **Mahiga**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 3 August 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of the United Republic of Tanzania (January 2006)

Introduction

During the presidency of the United Republic of Tanzania, in January 2006, the Security Council held 31 meetings, including 17 sessions of informal consultations and one open debate on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region of Africa. Five resolutions and four presidential statements were adopted.

Africa

Central African Republic

On 20 January, in informal consultations, the members of the Security Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on the Central African Republic. The Council members were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General/General Lamine Cissé, on the political, security, socio-economic, humanitarian and human rights situations in the country. It was noted that there had been a slight improvement on human rights and economic performance but that insecurity continued.

Côte d'Ivoire

In informal consultations on 17 January the Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on the deterioration of the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire and political developments relating to the implementation of resolution 1633 (2005). The Council also considered the Secretary-General's report on the activities of UNOCI with special focus on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, elections and the strengthening of UNOCI.

On 19 January, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/2), in which it expressed serious concern over disturbances in Côte d'Ivoire, welcomed the urgent mission led by President Obasanjo and reiterated its full support to the Prime Minister and the International Working Group.

The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1652 (2006) at its 5354th meeting on 24 January, extending the mandate of UNOCI and the French forces that support it until 15 December 2006.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Council members held informal consultations on 6 January during which the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi,

presented the twentieth report of the Secretary-General on the activities of MONUC. The Council was also informed of the results of the constitutional referendum held on 18 and 19 December 2005, in which 56 per cent of the registered voters participated; 80 per cent of them voted in favour of the new Constitution. The Council was informed of the financial gap that had to be filled to facilitate the electoral process, the robust action taken by the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the assistance of MONUC against armed groups and militias in the Kivus and Ituri and the threat posed by foreign armed groups, including LRA, to peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

On 25 January the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2006/4), in which it condemned the attack on a MONUC detachment in Garamba national park on 23 January, in which eight peacekeepers from Guatemala were killed in an operation against suspected LRA elements. The Council also underlined the importance of the electoral process.

By resolution 1654 (2006), adopted unanimously at the 5360th meeting, the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to re-establish the Group of Experts referred to in resolutions 1533 (2004) and 1596 (2005), and declared its determination to monitor compliance with the arms embargo imposed by resolution 1493 (2003) and expanded by resolution 1596 (2005).

Ethiopia and Eritrea

In informal consultations on 9 January, the Council members received the Secretary-General's report on the restrictions still imposed on UNMEE and a briefing from the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on the different options that the Security Council might have to consider if the restrictions persisted.

The Council was also briefed by the President on his meetings with the representatives of Ethiopia and Eritrea, who impressed upon him their continued confidence and trust in the United Nations facilitating role in their effort to tackle the boundary demarcation problem.

The Permanent Representative of the United States of America, Ambassador John Bolton, informed the Council of his Government's intention to send a delegation to be led by the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, Jendayi Fraser, to Ethiopia and Eritrea to discuss the implementation of the Border Commission decision and also try to defuse the stalemate.

Great Lakes region

On 27 January, the Security Council held a public debate at the ministerial level on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, Asha-Rose Mtengeti-Migiro, chaired the meeting. A total of 45 representatives including 15 Ministers from Africa and Europe participated in the debate on the challenges facing the region.

At the end of the debate resolution 1653 (2006) was unanimously adopted as a presidential text. Recalling its resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1631 (2005), the Council invited the international community to support regional efforts to sustain peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region; called upon all States in the region

to put an end to the activities of illegal armed groups; and to strengthen and institutionalize respect for human rights, including women's rights, rule of law and democratic practices; recognized the significance of the Dar es Salaam Declaration and the urgency of holding a second international conference in Nairobi; and underlined the potential importance of the Peacebuilding Commission in the region.

Western Sahara

In informal consultations of 18 January, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara, Peter van Walsum, briefed the members of the Council on the stalemate in resolving the question of Western Sahara following the rejection of the Baker plan by a party to the conflict.

Sudan

On 13 January the Security Council held a public meeting followed by informal consultations on the Sudan. The members of the Council were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jan Pronk, on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, particularly on the establishment of the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan. The briefing focused on the establishment of key commissions and the adoption of specific legislation required for the creation of the remaining commissions. The Special Representative expressed concern over the strained relations between the Sudan and Chad.

The Council members also heard from the facilitator of the Abuja talks on Darfur, Salim Ahmed Salim, who called for action to ensure the effectiveness of the mechanism established to implement the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement, including the threat of sanctions, recognition of the role played by the neighbours of the Sudan, coordinated support of the international partners, adequate financial resources and support to AMIS.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 17 January the Security Council was briefed by the outgoing Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jean Arnault, on the situation in Afghanistan and received the Secretary-General's report on the activities of UNAMA. The Council members heard about the continuing violence in southern Afghanistan, including attacks against a Canadian convoy and the killing of a political director, Glen Berry. They were also informed that the Bonn process had been completed with the inauguration of the new Afghan Assembly on 19 December 2005, and that the Afghanistan Compact was being launched in London as a peacebuilding agenda in the areas of security, governance, human rights, the rule of law, development and counter-narcotics.

A statement to the press was issued at the end of the meeting reaffirming the importance of the London conference on Afghanistan scheduled for 31 January and 1 February and the Afghanistan Compact as a basis for providing a solid framework for the next stage of rebuilding the country with Afghan ownership assisted by international efforts.

Timor-Leste

A public meeting on Timor-Leste was held on 23 January, during which the Council members heard a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sukehiro Hasegawa, on the implementation of the mandate UNOTIL, including the preparation for the transfer of functions to United Nations agencies and other development partners. The Special Representative noted that the United Nations had carried out a successful peacekeeping and peacebuilding operation with the support of Timorese people and leaders.

The Council was also addressed by the President of Timor-Leste, Xanana Gusmão, on the report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, current developments and challenges and his country's needs and expectations.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Lebanon

The Council members issued a presidential statement on 23 January (S/PRST/2006/3), in which the Council noted the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon and the holding of free and credible elections and commended the Government of Lebanon for the steps taken towards full restoration of its authority throughout its territory and its willingness to establish full diplomatic relations and demarcate its border with the Syrian Arab Republic. The Council regretted however the non-implementation of other provisions of resolution 1559 (2004).

On 25 January the Council members were briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the activities of UNIFIL, during which he reported continuing acts of hostility across the Blue Line.

On 31 January, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1655 (2006), by which it extended the mandate of UNIFIL until 31 July 2006; expressed great concern about serious violations of the withdrawal line and urged the parties to put to an end to the violations; and urged the Government of Lebanon to extend its authority to the south of the country.

In an open briefing followed by informal consultations on 31 January, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Angela Kane, informed the Council members that the Secretary-General was sending a team to Lebanon to look into the possibility of establishing a tribunal to prosecute all those involved in serious terrorist acts in Lebanon.

International Independent Investigation Commission

The members of the Council issued a statement to the press on 13 January, in which they welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to appoint Serge Brammertz as the Commissioner of the International Independent Investigation Committee into the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and commended his predecessor, Detlev Mehlis, for his outstanding work. In a subsequent briefing on 31 January, the Assistant Secretary-General told the members that Commissioner Brammertz had arrived in Beirut to commence work.

The situation in the Middle East

In an open briefing followed by informal consultations on 31 January, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council members on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

Europe

Georgia

On 26 January the Security Council held a private meeting followed by informal consultations on the situation in Georgia. During the private meeting the Council members were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Heidi Tagliavini, on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, and the activities of UNOMIG, during which she informed the members about the Abkhaz proposal on the opening of a human rights office, which UNOMIG was considering; the unresolved security situation in Gali district; and the visit of the Secretary-General to Tbilisi and his meeting with President Saakashvili. The Special Envoy of the President of Georgia, Irakli Alasania, made a statement followed by the representative of the Russian Federation. Members of the Council then moved to informal consultations to consider the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Georgia.

On 31 January the Council members unanimously adopted resolution 1656 (2006) extending the mandate of UNOMIG until 31 March 2006.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

In an open briefing on 16 January, the Security Council was addressed by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Karel de Gucht, on the Organization's activities that complement the work of the United Nations. He outlined the priorities of the Organization under Belgian chairmanship, including the promotion of the rule of law in the OSCE region, improving penal systems and access to justice, combating international crime and ensuring that OSCE would play its expected role in the decision on the future status of Kosovo.

Other issues

Bureaux of subsidiary bodies

On 4 January, the President announced that the Security Council had agreed on the composition of the bureaux of all subsidiary bodies of the Council except the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and the Working Group on General Issues of Sanctions, on which consultations were continuing.

On 31 January, it was agreed that the Chairman of the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions would hold office until 30 June 2006. The arrangement would be on a trial basis. During June 2006 a review would be conducted to determine whether the tenure of office of the Chair should revert to the existing practice (monthly chairmanship by the President of the Security

Council), or be for a period of six months, or, as in the case of other working groups, be fore a period of 12 months.

Working Group on Tribunals

At the request of the President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Judge Fausto Pocar, the President of the Security Council convened the Working Group on Tribunals on 20 January. The Working Group deliberated on the possibility of amending the statute of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia so as to have a fourth judge sitting in the three chambers in the forthcoming trials which would be consolidating cases so as to achieve the Tribunal's completion strategy.

The request by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was fully discussed by the members of the Working Group, who sought various clarifications from the President of the Tribunal. The President came to brief the Working Group on the required amendment to appoint three judges. The members of the Working Group found merit in the proposed amendment as it would save time and reduce costs for the Tribunal.

The Working Group decided that article 12 of the statute of the Tribunal should be amended to reflect the new changes. The Office of Legal Affairs was to coordinate with the Tribunal to draft the exact amendment, which would have to be brought to the Security Council for formal approval in the form of a resolution. The General Assembly would have to approve the programme budget implications in due course.

Peacebuilding Commission

Following the adoption of resolution 1646 (2005) in which the Security Council decided that two non-permanent members of the Council would be selected annually, in addition to the permanent members, to participate in the Organizational Committee of the newly established Peacebuilding Commission, the Council unanimously agreed, on 13 January, to the selection of Denmark and the United Republic of Tanzania for a term of one year, until 31 December 2006.